

FACT SHEET

SUPPORTING EDUCATION 2006 INITIATIVES

Investing in education means investing in Hawai'i's most precious legacy – our next generation. The Lingle-Aiona Administration is committed to putting more teachers in the classroom, more funds into the schools, and more accountability into the system. The Administration also wants to provide parents with more options by expanding charter school alternatives.

The Administration will remain focused on enhancing higher education. The University of Hawai'i is a critical player in Hawai'i's economic future. By giving the University of Hawai'i the authority and funds it needs to compete globally, we can help provide our students with a first class education.

Support Teachers and Help Students

The Administration has developed a comprehensive package of legislative proposals and budget items to support teachers, the teaching profession, and students. We have developed incentives and policy changes to allow qualified persons to become teachers, and to encourage existing teachers to continue in the field, improve their skills, and work in underserved areas. The focus of the proposed incentives is to broaden the recruitment pool and promote longevity in the profession for those who want to stay. The Administration also proposes investing significant resources at the classroom level to support students in preschool, special education, Hawaiian language immersion, and the English as a Second Language program.

The first bill recognizes the value and resources that retired public school teachers bring to the classroom.

- Allows the Department of Education and Charter School System to employ retired credentialed teachers in labor shortage and difficult to fill school-level instructional teaching positions.
- Clarifies that these retired teachers may work up to 100 percent of the full-time equivalent.
- Further clarifies that the employment of such retired teachers shall be for a period up to 24 months on a full-time equivalency basis.
- Directs the retired teacher to mentor subordinates and co-workers.
- Allows the retired teacher to receive the entitled normal retirement benefits without penalty.

The second bill broadens the Hawai'i Educator Loan Program and provides resources to operate the program.

- This bill provides financial support to students who complete any State-approved teacher education program recognized by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board. The recipient, in turn, agrees to teach in the Hawai'i public school system, including Hawai'i charter schools, for six years.

- The \$500,000 appropriated for this program may potentially assist up to 125 students per year in acquiring their teaching degrees.

In addition to this proposal, there are supplemental initiatives that, together with the investment in the Hawai'i Educator Loan Program, will increase the number of qualified teachers and teaching positions in the public school system:

- Funding request for the University of Hawai'i at Manoa College of Education to provide up to an additional 100 graduates per year with teaching degrees. This request includes the support for the University of Hawai'i System to partner with the national Teach for America Program and recruit 50 highly qualified teachers for Hawai'i schools.
- Additionally, funds to provide space for 150 University of Hawai'i Community College System students pursuing teaching degrees who wish to transfer into the University of Hawai'i at Manoa College of Education program.
- \$19.4 million in funding for 154 positions in the areas of special education preschool, special education services, Hawaiian Language Immersion, and English as a Second Language.

The third bill directs the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board to establish an expedited teacher certification process to enhance the pool of qualified teachers in Hawai'i's public and charter schools.

- The process will allow persons with an accredited college bachelor's or higher degree to become certified to teach in the subject in which they are degreed.
- The process will require the applicant to complete the same or similar training course provided to substitute teachers in the Department of Education.
- This measure will also establish a position on the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board for a person who is not a teacher and can provide an outside perspective.

A fourth bill will reward professional development and provide an incentive for our finest teachers to help our schools that most need improvement. This measure establishes the Hawai'i Master Teacher Program in recognition of teachers who achieve National Board Certification.

- Allows schools in need of improvement to hire a National Board Certified teacher to teach in the school for at least three years.
- Teachers who are National Board Certified and agree to teach and mentor in a school in need of improvement for three years, and assist the school in improving State assessment test scores will receive a \$10,000 per year bonus stipend.
- Appropriates \$800,000 for the Hawai'i Master Teacher Program.

Fund School Repairs and Maintenance

Well-maintained school facilities are an essential part of a good educational system. In addition to the \$216 million appropriated by the Legislature in fiscal year 2006 and \$65 million in fiscal year 2007, the Lingle-Aiona Administration's FY 2007 supplemental budget proposes \$90 million more for school repair, maintenance, and construction projects statewide.

- \$40 million in cash assistance for small-level school repair and maintenance will provide the Department of Education with the resources to address immediate repairs such as broken doors, windows, light fixture replacements, and repair of bathroom fixtures.
- \$50 million in general obligation bonds for capital improvement projects will assist the Department of Education in addressing storm water plans, large scale school repair and maintenance (particularly asbestos removal, air conditioning, special education renovations, and playground equipment), and public accommodation.
- This amount includes funding for an eight-classroom building for Campbell High School; design and planning money for a new `Ewa Makai Middle School on O`ahu; and the design, construction, and equipment for a new classroom building at Lana`i High and Elementary School.

Improve Accountability and Management

The Lingle-Aiona Administration calls for increased transparency in identifying, documenting, and reporting on the more than \$2 billion in annual general fund appropriations, and hundreds of millions of dollars in capital improvement appropriations that the Hawai`i Department of Education receives.

With a declining enrollment in the Hawai`i public school system and low State assessment scores that measure student achievement, the Department of Education should be held accountable for the expenditures and policy decisions that clearly affect our public school student outcomes.

The Administration proposes the establishment of a 27-member nonpartisan commission to design and identify the steps necessary to implement a comprehensive, detailed, and understandable financial accountability system that permits the public to determine budgeted and expended funds throughout the Hawai`i Department of Education.

- A portion of the proposed system should include transparent reporting systems that can be utilized by the Board of Education, principals, teachers, legislative entities, the federal Department of Education, and the general public to determine the impact and measurable outcomes of specific expenditures
- The system should allow decision makers to determine what funds are expended for operations not directly tied to student success including consultants, legal fees, lobbying, dues and contributions, public relations, and lawsuit settlements.
- Additionally, the system should permit an analysis of whether federal and State moneys are used for the purposes designated at the time they were made available, whether some of the funds were not spent in the fiscal year for which they were approved, and why funds are returned to the federal government.

Support State Public Libraries

The Lingle-Aiona Administration strongly supports the Hawai'i State Public Library System and recommends full funding of their supplemental budget request. This includes:

- \$1.5 million in supplemental capital improvement project monies for health and safety projects and to complete Americans with Disabilities Act transition plan deficiencies.
- \$4.8 million for construction to expand Makawao Public Library on Maui.

Support Charter Schools

Charter schools serve as a vital, vibrant, and successful alternative to traditional public schools. The Administration has considered the recommendations of the 2005 Charter School Governance Task Force, the Economic Momentum Commission, and the Charter School Network and developed an omnibus charter school bill. Among other things, key issues addressed in this measure include:

- Creating a public charter school authority, as a separate Local Education Agency.
- Amending the composition of the Board of Education to allow representation of the charter schools on the board.
- Establishing strict standards for establishing and operating charter schools.
- Allowing additional chartering authorities, including the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents.
- Providing a per-pupil allotment for facilities. Without this change, charter schools would be ineligible to compete for federal charter school facilities incentive grants.
- Providing explicit authority for charter schools to own, lease, or transfer land and property, and allows them to contract for services to help operate their schools.

In addition to this measure, the Lingle-Aiona Administration is requesting an additional \$17.9 million in 2007 for charter school students to receive the equivalent per-pupil funding amounts for their education as traditional public school students receive.

Support the University of Hawai'i

The Administration supports increased funding and autonomy for the University of Hawai'i System. To empower the University to become a driving economic force in our economy and compete globally, the Administration proposes:

- Returning to the University of Hawai'i the authority to purchase its own goods and services.
- Extending the University's power to operate and manage its own accounting and financial systems; the Legislature has granted yearly extensions to the University since 1986 and the Administration believes the University has proven its ability to successfully manage fiscal matters and this power should be permanent.

- Allow the University to adopt administrative rules to govern public and private activities on lands it owns and manages.
- Grant the University greater flexibility in the management of funds by consolidating outdated funds and adopting recommendations by the Legislative Auditor Marion Higa.
- Permit the University to enter into long-term leasing agreements with private entities and provide an expedited review process through the Department of Budget and Finance and the University's general counsel.

The Lingle-Aiona Administration supports the recommendation of the Economic Momentum Commission to attract top-level professors for our University of Hawai'i System by providing \$5 million to establish an Eminent Scholars Special Fund, with matching private contributions, to endow faculty positions at the University.

Other significant investments in the University of Hawai'i System include:

- \$43 million in general obligation bonds for major repair and maintenance projects statewide. A portion of this amount will be used to replace funds committed to the University of Hawai'i flood repairs. The balance will be used for reroofing, upgrades to mechanical and electrical systems, repainting, and resurfacing parking lots.
- \$209 million to begin construction of the West O'ahu campus; \$175 million of which will be private sector contributions to build this campus. The \$34 million in State funds will be used for the on and off-site infrastructure, including roads, sewer systems, and drainage.
- \$1.1 million for the Hawaiian Studies Program.
- Additional funding is included for supporting accreditation, improving security, and janitorial and utilities services.